

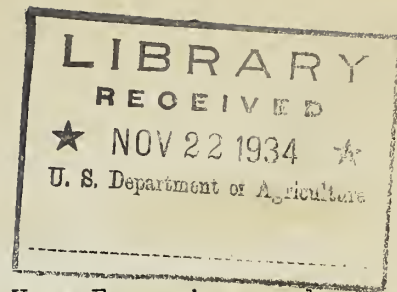
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HOUSEHOLD CALENDAR

The Thanksgiving Turkey.



An interview between Miss Ruth Van Deman, Bureau of Home Economics, and Morse Salisbury, Chief of Radio Service, delivered in the Department of Agriculture period, National Farm and Home Hour, broadcast by a network of 50 associate NBC stations, Tuesday, November 13, 1934.

--ooOoo--

MR. SALISBURY:

Well, Miss Van Deman, I hope you're going to live up to promises today.

MISS VAN DEMAN:

Promises? What promises?

MR. SALISBURY:

Well, I promised you'd tell how to cook a Thanksgiving turkey. And I promised that you'd settle this business of turkey stuffing. I hope you're going to come right out for dry stuffing, none of this wet soggy stuff.---

MR. KIMBALL:

Morse, hold on there a minute. I won't have you maligning my favorite stuffing. There's only one stuffing for a turkey -- nice moist stuffing all full of oysters. And seasoned up with sage 'n things. Isn't that right, Miss Van Deman?

MISS VAN DEMAN:

Wait a minute, Mr. Kimball, not so fast. You know it's like that strawberry shortcake controversy you gentlemen got so excited about last spring. All the world's divided about turkey stuffing, just as it is about shortcake. Some people like turkey stuffing very moist and very highly seasoned with sage and onion.

MR. KIMBALL:

You bet they do.

MISS VAN DEMAN:

But others like a stuffing that's dry and crumbly and delicately seasoned, so it won't cover up any of the good turkey flavor. There are two schools of thought. I try to be impartial.

MR. SALISBURY:

All the same, I know you prefer dry stuffing. I could tell by the way you talked about it.

MISS VAN DEMAN:

Well, of course, when I roast a turkey at home, I do use a dry breadcrumb stuffing. A stuffing seasoned with chopped celery and parsley and just a little savory, - all mixed up with melted butter or turkey fat.

(over)

MR. SALISBURY:

And just a suspicion of onion?

MISS VAN DEMAN:

Yes, just a soupcon of onion, as the French say.

MR. SALISBURY:

Umm - well, Ted, I'm sorry to differ with you, but that's the only stuffing worthy to go with good brown turkey gravy.

MR. KIMBALL:

Very well, Morse, every man to his own taste. But, Miss Van Deman, I'm glad you're more broad-minded.

MISS VAN DEMAN:

All right, gentlemen, now we've got the stuffing out of the way. Mr. Salisbury, have you any news about the turkey supply?

MR. SALISBURY:

Only what the Outlook report says. It predicts that prices will be higher this year than last - two or three cents a pound higher. Also, it says that some of the States where the drought hit hardest raised fewer turkeys. But for the country as a whole the turkey supply seems to be only 7 or 8 per cent under that of last year. And last year, you remember, was a very good year for turkeys. Something like nineteen million turkeys went to market during 1933. Of course, feed is scarcer and higher in price now than for 4 or 5 years past. Naturally, that will affect the turkeys on the market this fall, especially at Thanksgiving time. There probably won't be quite so many plump and well-finished young birds. But our friends over in the Bureau of Agricultural Economics tell me that there are plenty of good quality turkeys moving to market from all the big turkey-raising centers. There's no shortage of turkeys.

MISS VAN DEMAN:

What you say exactly checks up with my own personal experience. Last Sunday we had a dress rehearsal on Thanksgiving dinner. I roasted a young hen turkey, so I could check up again on oven temperatures and cooking time in an ordinary household gas range.

Our turkey weighed just nine pounds as we bought it in the market.

MR. SALISBURY:

And did you pay more than you did last year?

MISS VAN DEMAN:

Yes. Three cents more a pound than we paid last year early in November. Any way, this was a nice young bird, plump but not exceptionally fat. Maybe corn wasn't any too plentiful on the farm where this turkey was raised.

MR. SALISBURY:

In Maryland or Virginia probably. Well, Miss Van Deman, how long did it take you to roast this young 9-pound turkey?

MISS VAN DEMAN:

Two hours and 15 minutes, exactly. I put it into the oven at 11 o'clock and took it out at 1:15. Then I made the gravy and we had dinner at 1:30. The turkey was a beautiful golden brown all over, and tender and juicy.

MR. SALISBURY:

What's the secret of roasting a turkey to a turn like that? Is it art, or is it science?

MISS VAN DEMAN:

A little of both. I think controlling the heat of the oven is the biggest thing in roasting a turkey. I always watch the thermometer in the oven and keep the heat moderate (around 325 degrees F.) most of the time. When I'm using an electric range or an oil or coal stove and can't change the oven temperature quickly, I keep the heat moderate all the time. But when I'm using a gas range and can regulate the oven, I like to have it hot at the start (about 450 degrees F.), until the turkey begins to brown. Then I lower the heat and sometimes leave the door of the oven open for a few minutes to cool it down quickly. It's this slow cooking at moderate temperature that keeps the juices in a turkey.

MR. SALISBURY:

I thought a cover on the pan with some water in the bottom did that.

MISS VAN DEMAN:

No. Not with a young turkey. The minute you put a cover on the pan you hold in the steam. And steam around any kind of roasting meat draws the juices out. That's the idea of a pot roast, when you're working to make tough meat tender. I never steam-jacket a nice plump young turkey. I roast it in an open pan on a rack to keep it from sticking to the bottom. And about every half hour I baste it all over with the fat from the bottom of the pan.

MR. SALISBURY:

Miss Van Deman, do you have these times and temperatures for roasting a turkey all written out, so people can send and get them?

MISS VAN DEMAN:

Yes, we do. I'll be glad to send the complete directions for roasting a turkey, and for making the stuffing.

MR. SALISBURY:

Nice dry stuffing?

MISS VAN DEMAN:

Yes, Mr. Salisbury, a dry breadcrumb stuffing. And goodbye, everybody, for this time.

